



# Message of the Week

May 22-28, 2002

*Presented by Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN)*

**“On Memorial Day, we should honor those who have fallen in service to our country and support those who defend our freedom in the current war on terror.”**

- To many people, Memorial Day is a day off from work, a weekend at the beach, barbecues and baseball. But the true meaning of Memorial Day goes beyond family fun and fellowship.
- The idea of Memorial Day goes back to the years immediately following the Civil War when relatives of slain soldiers would decorate their graves with flowers. Three years after the end of the Civil War, General John Logan proclaimed this practice a holiday called Decoration Day, first observed on May 30, 1868.
- In 1882, Decoration Day was given its modern name of Memorial Day, and in 1971 Memorial Day was declared a national holiday on the last Monday in May each year. Today, Memorial Day is a day of remembrance for all who have given their lives in battle for America.
- Beyond the battles for the soil of America and our allies, our fallen soldiers should be remembered for their battles for the soul of America and our allies.
- Our troops fought and gave their lives, not just to end invasions and occupations, but to put an end to subjugation, persecution, and oppression. They died so that liberty could live. We must never forget the ultimate sacrifices our slain soldiers made.
- So this Memorial Day, in between the hikes and hamburgers, let's all pause to consider what American democracy might have become if not for the gallant sacrifices of our fallen soldiers of freedom.
- As America continues to be targeted by terrorists for its openness and love of liberty, it is more important than ever to stand behind the soldiers who keep us free.